

TAXI STAND SIGNAGE

City of Wilmington North Carolina | August 21, 2012

Announcing Pilot Project to Improve Downtown Taxi Stand Signage Thursday, August 30, 2012 | 5-7 p.m.

The Issue

As you may be aware, the subject of taxi services in the downtown area has become a topic of discussion again. While there are many parts to this issue, one piece that continues to draw attention is the availability of a functional “taxi stand” providing for more efficient pick up of bar patrons at the end of the night.

Present Situation

Currently, all parking spaces on both sides of Front Street for one block north and south of Market Street are posted for Taxis Only between midnight and 3 am. Unfortunately, these parking signs are too often ignored or not visible enough, we have been told. Evidence of this problem is the 1000+ parking tickets issued from January to June of this year. Some of the feedback we have received is that the signs are mounted too high to be seen. Others have said that the “dual” parking signs, allowing for public parking some of the time, but not all of the time, are confusing.



Above, right:
Front Street in its present state.

Below, right:
A mock-up of the proposed taxi stand spaces.



Signage Improvement to be Tested

Safety standards for sign height (and possible head injuries) do not allow us to lower the signs for visibility. Elimination of the “dual” signage would either take away (1) useful public parking during the day and evening or (2) useful taxi stand parking when it is most needed late at night. One possible solution that we will be testing in the next few weeks is the use of pavement markings in the parking spaces themselves. The words “Taxi Only After Midnight” will be painted in the designated parking spaces. Most of the time, the words on the pavement will be covered by a parked vehicle. Upon the changing of vehicles, however, (a short but critical decision time) the pavement marking would be very visible and difficult to ignore. We will be applying the pavement markings to the taxi stand spaces on both sides of Front Street in the first block north of Market only. This pilot project will enable us to compare results on compliance in this block with compliance in the first block south of Front Street, where no pavement markings will be applied—at least initially.



Above: A mock-up of the proposed taxi stand spaces.

Drop-In Opportunity to Get an Advance Look

If you would like to get an advance look at how these pilot pavement markings will appear, please feel free to stop by City Hall (Lord Spencer Compton Conference Room) on **Thursday, August 30, 2012** any time between **5 and 7 pm**. We'll have poster sized photographs of the streetscape with “photoshopped” images of pavement markings added. City staff will also be present to answer any questions you may have.

Please Keep In Mind...

While we realize that the issue of downtown taxi service is much broader than having a functional taxi stand, we do believe that this is one piece of the puzzle that (1) we can do something about fairly quickly, (2) will not be expensive to implement, and (3) can be easily reversed if we find the results to be less than we'd like. The only way to know for sure whether this approach will work is to give it a try and then see if it has a positive impact. In the meantime, look for City crews making these improvements in the next few weeks-- then please join us in observing and evaluating the effectiveness of this pilot project.

For further Information, please contact:

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